(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether suggestions have also been invited to make changes in the existing export-import poilcy of the country;

(d) whether any suggestions have been received so far;

(e) whether Government propose to take action on these suggestions; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) A number of steps were taken in the revised Export and Import Policy on 30th March, 1994 to simplify the policy and procedures. Other steps taken to gear up the export machinery include, inter. alia, green channel facility for exporters, facilitating export linked imports through Duty Exemption and EPCG Schemes, designating Nodal officers responsible for export promotion in various Departments, close interaction ith Apex Bodies, Chambers, associations and other exporting community besides activating the OGFT Organisation as export faciliator.

(c) to (f) Suggestions have been received from various cuarters which are under review. All suggestions towards Policy/ procedural simplifications will be taken into account while framing the revised Exim Policy Procedure.

U.S. proposal to boost trade ties with India

878. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that U.S.A. proposes to boost trade ties with India, and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) India has been identified as one of the Big Emerging Markets by USA. In January' 1995, Mr. Ronald H. Brown, US Commerce Secretary visited India on a Presidential Business Deveopment Mission alongwith Chief Executive Officers of a number of large US Companies. An MOU for setting up of Indo-US Commercial Alliance has also been signed. These efforts are expected to lead to stronger trade and commercial ties.

Hampering of Swiss Investment due to High tariffs

879. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem in 'The Statesman', dated 7th February, 1995 captioned "High tariffs hampering Swiss investment in India".

(b) if so, whether the President of the Swiss Federation of Commerce and Industry have pointed out several discrepancies and hurdles in the way of implementing Indo-Swiss trade agreements;

(c) if so, whether Government have taken any serious efforts to boost Indo-Swiss agreements; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. It has been reported in the Press that the President of the Swiss Feredation for Commerce and Industry touched upon certain difficulties in the export from Switzerland of textiles, watches and some items of food processing industries on account of India's import policy and high tariffs.

(c) and (d) It is Government's constant endavour to expand bilateral economic ties with all its partners including Switzerland. Government has been effecting a gradual reduction in tariffs. Trade Policy changes are part of an on-going exercise.

Steps to boost export of tea

880. SHRI KRISHAN KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to take serious steps to boost export of tea in order to save the Tea Industry from collapse;